



**SOMALIA: EXPANDING CRISIS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA
Background, Challenges, and Opportunities
of an Islamist Takeover**

**Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations
Subcommittees on Africa, Global Human Rights, and International Operations
and International Terrorism and Nonproliferation
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Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of Congress:

I am honored and pleased to have this opportunity to appear before you today to discuss, as the title of this hearing has it, “the expanding crisis in the Horn of Africa.” Last year, following research and field work in the subregion sponsored by the Institute for Infrastructure and Information Assurance, I had the opportunity to brief the staff of the Committee under the aegis of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation. Alas, the danger that preoccupied me at the time—the gathering strength of Islamist forces—has come to pass with the complete takeover of Mogadishu amid heavy fighting on June 5 by forces of the so-called “Union of Islamic Courts” which last Saturday reconstituted itself in what appears to be more stable institutional form as the “Council of Islamic Courts.” Notwithstanding the risible “peace deal” signed in Khartoum, Sudan, on June 22 between Somalia’s pretender “Transitional Federal Government” and certain representatives of the Islamic courts—an accord which, not-so-incidentally, addresses none of the major bones of contention between the two sides and which was only arrived at upon the insistence of the President of Sudan (the Islamists did not even attempt to meet the preconditions original set down by the interim “authorities”)—I remain convinced that we are indeed facing, as we have for some time, a challenge of great significance for the security not only of the Horn, but of the wider international community.

Since Dr. Frazer and Mr. Prendergast are certainly better positioned than I am to speak to the ongoing political and military developments in Somalia, with your permission, I would like to focus my remarks on the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism in Somalia, its origins and interactions with wider ideological, political, economic, and social currents, and their implications—both challenges and opportunities—for regional and international security and, of course, for the United States of America.

Historical Background

Traditionally, the Somali subscribe to Sunni Islam and follow the Shāfiī school (*mahdab*) of jurisprudence which, although conservative, is open to a variety of liberal views regarding practice. Throughout most of historical times up to independence, while there were different movements within the Sunni Islam in Somalia, the most dominant were the Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqa*), especially that of the Qadiriyya order. While traditional Islamic schools and scholars (*ulamā*) played a role as focal points for rudimentary political opposition to colonial rule in Italian Somalia, historically their role in the politics of the Somali clan structure was neither institutionalized nor particularly prominent. In part this is because historically *Sharīā* was not especially entrenched in Somalia: being largely pastoralists, the Somali relied more on customary law than on religious prescriptions. Hence, Somali Islamism is largely a post-colonial movement which became active in the late 1980s and strengthened by the state collapse in 1991 and the ensuing civil war, international intervention, external meddling, and efforts by Somalis themselves to reconstruct politically. Absent this chain of events, it is doubtful that militant Islamism would be much more than a marginal force in Somali politics.

At its origins, Somali Islamism is an import dating at most to the 1950s when the 1953 establishment in Mogadishu of an Institute of Islamic Studies run by Egyptian scholars from Cairo's al-Azhar University introduced both Arabic language curriculum and contact with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*). As is well-known, unlike the Sufis who emphasize socialization, moral education, and spiritual preparation, the Muslim Brothers stress organization, activism, and the socio-political dimension of change directed toward the creation of a modern Islamic state. After independence in 1960s, Egyptians opened secondary schools in many of the major towns of Somalia. In the 1960s and 1970s, Saudi religious and educational institutions—especially the Islamic University of Medina, the Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, and the Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh—joined al-Azhar in offering scholarships to the graduates of these institutions. It would be fair to draw a parallel with Sudan where the founders of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood, which later gave rise to the currently-ruling National Islamic Front, were Sudanese alumni of

Egyptian institutions. In fact, the nascent Somali Muslim Brotherhood was so visible by the mid-1970s—when it mobilized massive opposition to the Family Law of 1975 for its recognition and promotion of the legal and economic equality of women—that the dictatorial regime of Siad Barre took measures to suppress it, driving its adherents underground. (“Underground” should not be equated with “dormant” as some of the Brothers in hiding organized themselves into cells which, from time to time, carried out spectacular acts of terrorism like the July 1989 killing of the Roman Catholic missionary bishop of Mogadishu, Salvatore Colombo, an Italian citizen.)

The Somali Muslim Brothers eventually coalesced in two groups: the Somali Islamic Movement (*al-Islah*), founded in Saudi Arabia in 1978, and the Somali Islamic Union (*al-Itihaad*), established in the early 1980s. There was and is no clear demarcation between the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Union, the memberships of the two and the leadership network overlapping considerably. The “differences” between the two groups are largely a function of their clandestine birth. Both sought the creation of an expansive “Islamic Republic of Greater Somalia” and eventually a political union embracing all Muslims in the Horn of Africa.

State Collapse, International Intervention, and Emergent Islamism

The ouster of Siad Barre in January 1991 led to the chaotic situation of internecine warfare that laid waste to Somalia. At times, as Matt Bryden, now of the International Crisis Group, put it succinctly, it seemed that the factions fought not so much over the Somalia’s future as its ruins. Ironically, al-Itihaad found itself in conflict with Mohammed Farah Aydiid, the warlord who would become the international community’s *bête noire*, and, after being defeated by him, it was forced to withdraw after heavy fighting.

This withdrawal, which coincided with the fall of the Derg in neighboring Ethiopia, allowed the Somali Islamists to regroup in the ethnic Somali-inhabited Ogaden region of Ethiopia where there were also large numbers of Somali refugees. From this period emerged the cooperation between Somali Islamists and Ethiopian groups like the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) which continue to struggle against the Ethiopian government that was established at that time. Al-Itihaad’s cooperation with armed Ethiopian dissidents was so close that analysts had trouble distinguishing the forces. This last datum explains a great deal of Addis Ababa’s current preoccupation with the Union of Islamic Courts seizure of Mogadishu.

Most ironically, the international intervention (UNITAF, UNOSOM, UNOSOM II) in Somalia beginning in 1993 unwittingly allowed the Islamists back into areas that from which Aydiid had ejected them. In addition to infiltrating the civil society sector, al-Itihaad adherents emerged as a business class which amassed fortunes in the service economy that developed around the international intervention. Some armed al-Itihaad militiamen were even paid to provide security escort services to United Nations personnel.

Following UNOSOM II's departure and in the absence of effect political structures of any kind—except in Somaliland, to which I will return—Islamic authorities cropped up in response to problems of crime, *Shari'ah* being a common denominator around which different communities could organize. As the Islamic legal authorities gradually assumed policing as well as adjudicating functions, those authorities having greater (viz, external) resources acquired greater influence.

From al-Itihaad to Union of Islamic Courts to Council of Islamic Courts

From its inception, al-Itihaad rejected the non-confessional nature of the Somali state and sought to establish an Islamic regime in the country based on a strict Wahhābī interpretation of the Muslim faith. When, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Siad Barre dictatorship, it found the direct road to power blocked by Mohammed Farah Aydiid, it adopted it tactics in favor of a more subtle approach which has proven its seductiveness, viz, economic and other social programs together with the Islamic courts.

Many believe or at least have tried to convince themselves that the characteristic traditions of Somali society will inhibit the rise of militant Islamism. The claim is that the strength of the clan structure coupled with the moderation of the ingrained Shāfiī legal tradition would act as a check on Islamist radicalism. However, these analysts have overlooked some salient elements.

First, two decades of autocratic rule under Siad Barre, followed by more than a decade of violent anarchy have undoubtedly changed the social fabric of Somali society enough to allow the emergence of Islamism.

Second, the flow of Somalis to educational opportunities in Saudi institutions followed by that of many other Somalis to jobs in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries produced, upon their return, a new Somali elite which not only came to dominate important sectors of society, but for whom what was once a foreign version—some would say perversion—of Islam was no longer so alien.

Third, the role of Saudi and other Arab charity organizations in this process should not be underestimated. The “aid” money from these sources to Somalia has flowed largely through al-Itihaad’s Islamist leaders and allowed them to provide rudimentary social services as well as the peace and security which other actors have failed to do.

Fourth, Somalia’s business community has played an active role in helping the Islamists as a means of establishing a stable environment for their business interests without the need to pay protection money to feuding warlords. In addition, remittance banks have become a source of revenue and patronage for the Islamists.

In short, the chaotic situation across the entire former territories of the defunct Somali Democratic Republic (with the exception of Somaliland) created the conditions for the advent of the Islamists of al-Itihaad in the same way that the Taliban of Afghanistan arose out that country’s anarchy as a force for order amid factious leaders and their rapacious militias. Well positioned because of the events of 1991-1995, al-Itihaad’s *Shari‘a* courts are credited with marked improvements in security in many areas of the country, like the Mogadishu neighborhoods long plagued by the kidnappings, robberies, and other criminal acts of the likes of Usman Ali Atto, a multimillionaire warlord-businessman who is not only Mogadishu’s largest landowner, but also now “minister of public works” in the “Transitional Federal Government” of Somalia.

A word is perhaps in order concerning the overly used, but ill-defined, term “warlord” in the Somali context. These “gentlemen” did not take up arms because of political or social grievances, but rather because of economic calculation. Their actions are motivated by the pursuit of illicit enrichment and war booty; the individual fiefdoms they have carved out are used as a base for the exploitation of confiscated properties, ports, and airports, as well as for drug trafficking and arm trade. Hence for them the underlying point is to prolong conflict in order to profit from it, rather than necessarily to win the war. The use of violence for these men is a form of conducting business.

So while under these circumstances the Somali people’s embrace of the undeniable benefits brought by the Islamists does not necessarily imply approval of the al-Itihaad political agenda, it would be delusional to believe that they will not become, however gradually, ideologically and politically influenced by the Islamists’ social programs, which are focused on the long-term, sustained growth of the movement. The Islamists growing involvement with businesses and social services provide them with security and cover wherein to inculcate their ideology into a community whose desire for peace may blind them to the Faustian deal they are striking, although the full scope of that pact with the devil may perhaps be more evident now that the loose “Union of Islamic

Courts” has been institutionalized as a “Council of Islamic Courts” with a legislative council and other accoutrements of government.

The Threat Posed by the Somali Islamists

While much has been made of the fact that only some of the Islamic courts in the “Union” are considered radical—and I would question some of the low estimates used by some analysts—the point is that, while the overall umbrella group has put out some mixed signals, the radicals are less ambiguous. They have even closed down makeshift cinemas to prevent people from watching the World Cup—even the Taliban permitted soccer as long as the only cheer allowed was “*Allahu akbar*.” More seriously, on Monday they announced that they will stone to death five accused rapists—the latest sign of their intentions to install a hard line regime not unlike their Afghan counterparts. And the Somali Islamists are better organized, as attested to that the fact that their leader, Sheikh Hassan Dahir ‘Aweys, head of the Ifka Halane Court of the Habr Gidir/Ayr, was chosen as chairman of the new “legislature” of the “Council of Islamic Courts,” the *majlis al-shura*.

(As an aside, in my judgment the appointment of Sheikh ‘Aweys and the other members of the “legislature” represents a qualitative shift by the Islamists towards institutional permanence. While some commentators have tried to minimize the significance of the event by highlighting the “consultative” nature of the body, I would point to the precise Arabic term employed by vice chairman Sheikh Abdulaqadir Ali Umar in making the announcement: *majlis al-shura*. The term has a very precise meaning within Islamic jurisprudence for a body that must discuss and decide all major undertakings; it is the seat of power. Al-Qaeda, for example, uses the very same term for the groups immediately below its “emir,” Osama bin Laden.)

Sheikh ‘Aweys was a colonel in the prison service of the Siad Barre regime—for which it would fair to read “torturer”—who was conspicuously decorated by the dictator. Later he became vice-chairman and military commander of al-Itihaad. After his defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians in 1996, Hassan Dahir ‘Aweys settled in Merka where he established the first Islamic court in the lower Shebelle region. He then moved to Mogadishu to preside over the Islamization of the southern part of the capital. While the name “‘Aweys” does not presently resonate among many Americans, it should be recalled that he was prominent enough that it figured on the list of 189 terrorist individuals and organizations singled out by the U.S. government in September 2001. While I cannot speak to the evidence on which that very correct decision was made, the record is very clear. This man has made numerous inflammatory remarks—including

ones calling for the spilling of the blood of any peacekeepers setting foot on Somali soil and accusing those who have cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts as “selling us to the Jews” —and taken action over the years to put them into action. (I have taken the liberty of appending to my remarks a representative selection of pronouncements by Sheikh ‘Aweys and other Islamist leaders.)

The militia commander of the Islamic courts, Adan Hashi ‘Ayro, is a close relative (some sources say nephew) of ‘Aweys who trained in Afghanistan with al-Qaeda before returning to his country after 9/11. He is a cold-blooded killer with a number of terrorist kills to his “credit,” including four foreign aid workers in Somaliland—Italian nurse Annalena Tonelli (Borama, Somaliland, October 5, 2003), British teachers Richard and Enid Eyeington (Sheikh Secondary School, Somaliland, October 21, 2003), Kenyan Florence Cheriuyot (GTZ truck between Hargeysa and Berbera, Somaliland, April 19, 2004)—ten former Somali military officers, and most spectacularly, Abdul Qadir Yahya Ali, founder of Center for Research and Dialogue in Mogadishu (July 11, 2005).

Another prominent Islamic courts activist is Hassan Turki, an al-Itihaad leader who was recently behind subversive activities in eastern Ethiopia and who is closely linked with *al-Takfir wal-Hijra* (“Excommunication and Exodus”), a group so extreme that it considered Osama bin Laden too moderate and tried to kill *him* when he lived in Sudan in 1996.

And if there are any doubts about the intentions of these “gentlemen,” permit me to read the manifests *just two* arms shipments received by the Islamists from the Middle East (via Eritrea) on March 3 and March 5, respectively:

- (i) 200 boxes of Zu-23 anti-aircraft ammunition, 200 boxes of B-10 anti-tank ammunition, 200 boxes of DShK anti-aircraft ammunition, 200 boxes of Browning M2 50-caliber heavy machine gun ammunition, ammunition for the ZP-39 anti-aircraft gun, 50 rocket propelled grenade launchers, 50 light anti-armor weapons, 50 M-79 grenade launchers, and communications equipments to be mounted on technicals.
- (ii) 1,000 short-version AK-47 automatic rifles, 1,000 pairs of binoculars, 1,000 remote-control bombs, 1,000 anti-personnel mines, ammunition for 120mm mortars

The data—coming, incidentally, from the United Nations Security Council’s Arms Embargo Violation Monitoring Group originally set up under Resolution 1407—show

qualities and quantities of armaments far in excess of anything needed for “mere” civil conflict with internal rivals.

Insight might be gained by looking back to the late 1990s when al-Itihaad had a significant insurgent force, capable of mounting small-scale, but deadly, operations in neighboring countries. In July 1996, for example, it attempted to assassinate the Ethiopian minister of transport and communications, Abdel Majid Hussein, himself a Muslim albeit one of insufficient “fervor” for Sheikh Aweys. The minister was struck down by six bullets as he stepped out of his office and was lucky to survive; two of his bodyguards died. Ethiopia’s response was to dispatch its forces across the border into the Gedo region of Somalia the following month, attacking al-Itihaad bases in Dolo and Luuq. (The reprisal attack destroyed what appears to have been an al-Itihaad training camp for international terrorists—possibly with links to al-Qaeda—as evidenced by the skilled resistance put up by non-Somalis, including eighteen Arabs and Pakistanis whose bodies were recovered by the Ethiopians.)

And it is hardly reassuring that such allegedly moderate voices such as the spokesman for the Islamic Courts Union, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmad, who was shunted off just last Saturday to an implementation role within the Islamist movement, was “truth challenged.” In a June 10 press conference, for example, he denied that there were any links to foreign terrorist organizations, despite the fact that three foreign al-Qaeda leaders indicted in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—Fazul Abdullah Mohammed of Comoros, who figures on the FBI’s “Most Wanted Terrorists” list with a \$5 million bounty on his head; Saleh Ali Salih Nabhan of Kenya; and Abu Taha al-Sudani of Sudan—are being sheltered by his colleagues in Mogadishu. (The same al-Qaeda cell is believed to be responsible for the 2002 suicide bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, that killed fifteen people and a simultaneous attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner.) Also, there are credible reports that foreign militants—including Arabs, Pakistanis, Sudanese, and Oromo—were fighting alongside the Islamists in recent clashes.

It should be noted that the electronic connectivity provided by satellite-based internet access will probably enable failed state-based terrorist hubs to extend their connectivity beyond the immediate region of the failed state in which they take up residence. This was certainly the case with the diamond-trading al-Qaeda hubs in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and it seems likely that similar opportunities would emerge for al-Qaeda and other international terrorist hubs should they be able to gain a foothold in Somalia.

While it is important not to overstate the significance of transnational linkages of Somali’s radical Islamists, it is nonetheless true that terrorist operatives have been and

continue to be able to move into, within, and out of Somalia with little or no visibility to international security and intelligence agencies. As the attacks in East Africa demonstrate that terrorist groups were able to move financial resources, acquire sophisticated armaments, and launch the attacks without coming to the attention of or provoking effective responses by regional or global powers.

Somaliland, Embattled Beacon

Amid the ruin of the former Somalia, the reemergence of the Republic of Somaliland in the northwest is a remarkable story. The former British Protectorate of Somaliland became independent in 1960 a full week before the Italian-administered UN Trust Territory of Somalia achieved its independence. The two sovereignties were joined in a union which ultimately could be described as a loveless match. With the collapse of the Somali state, the Somalilanders reasserted their independence and created a functional government, complete with all the accoutrements of modern statehood—including democratic elections, the parliamentary polls last year being observed, among others, by the International Republican Institute with funds from USAID—save, alas, international recognition.

For all these reasons, I have no doubt that after they defeat or co-opt the interim so-called government in Baidoa, the Islamists will turn their attentions on the democratically-elected constitutional government in Hargeysa. I would also add that, although a full discussion of the case of Somaliland is beyond the scope of the present hearing, neither is it divorced from it. Surely if our national commitment to support and strengthen democracy as a bulwark against extremist ideologies and terrorist violence has any real-world application, it is certainly the case here. As I have argued previously, “the people of Somaliland have made their choice for political independence and democratic progress. While they have stumbled occasionally along the way, their efforts deserve encouragement through the appropriate economic, political, and security cooperation – which, in turn, will anchor Somaliland within America's orbit as well as international society. As a beginning, a few modest steps would go a long way towards engaging Somalilanders, including a minimal consular presence in Hargeysa and some security cooperation through U.S. Central Command’s Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, based at Camp Lemonier in nearby Djibouti.”

Somalia's "Transitional Federal Government"

The international community has taken to trying to shore up the so-called "Transitional Federal Government" based in Baidoa and led by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, a former warlord who is as much a terrorist as his Islamist opponents: in December 2002, he tried to assassinate President Dahir Rayale Kahine of Somaliland while the latter visited the eastern Somaliland town of Laas 'Aanood. Furthermore, it should be noted that Abdullahi's anti-Islamist fervor is rather newfound. In his previous incarnation as the self-proclaimed "President of Puntland," Abdullahi cooperated with the ONLF—which, as I previously noted, was inseparably linked with al-Itihaad—in hostilities against his various foes, including the government of Somaliland. He also allowed the Puntland port of Bosaaso to be one of the primary entry points for al-Itihaad-aligned weapons smugglers who eventually turned on him and drove him from his "capital" of Gerowe in June 2001. All this comes as of now surprise for those who have followed Abdullahi's career and recall that he was the protégé of Ethiopia's Marxist tyrant, Mengistu Hailemariam, as well as a recipient of the largesse of Libyan leader Mu'ammar Qaddafi during a period when the latter was actively engaged in state sponsored terrorism.

In any event, the utility of engaging the rather notional interim government is rather questionable. It took two years of negotiation with self-appointed "leaders" to set up the transitional government in October 2004 and give it a five-year mandate. This "government" has yet to enter its capital and has even failed to assert complete control in its temporary base in Baidoa. "President" Abdullahi rarely visits Somalia itself and it is painfully apparent that his base of support is weak, if existent at all.

Conclusion: The Road Ahead

Since the unlamented collapse of the Siad Barre dictatorship, Somalia has endured more than a decade of violence during which more than ten attempts to start a peace process failed. While the attempts have been well-intentioned—the stability of Somalia being an essential component of the war on terrorism—they have also been misguided, focused as they have been on the imposition and/or propping up of self-appointed interim "authorities" with neither legitimacy nor authority. The "T" in TFG ("Transitional Federal Government") might as well stand for "Transient." Faced with the rising power of the Islamists of the "Council of Islamic Courts," what is needed is a break with previous American and international policies of engagements and disengagements, both of the wrong kind.

In order to achieve the sort of stability needed in the Horn of Africa, authentic voices of civil society need to be engaged, not self-interested warlords or self-appointed governmental and non-governmental rent seekers. Over the long-term this means a patient approach that assists civil society in developing projects that belong to and benefit the people—truly winning the “hearts and minds” by privileging initiatives that originate from the Somali people and not foreign imports. And, ultimately, this would also include some *approchement* to the Republic of Somaliland, whose existence is the expression of its people’s sovereign will. And, of course, it may also include allowing the appropriate forces—such as the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa based in Djibouti—to employ selective, but decisive, force to deter terrorist activities.

To this end, I offer suggestions along four general lines:

- (1) The United States should take no actions which have the appearance of strengthening the so-called “Transitional Federal Institutions” of Somalia. Even if they were not headed by a thug; even if their legitimacy in the eyes of many Somalis is very questionable; they would still be too weak to be effectual, but not so toothless—at least in terms and scope of the juridical fiction of their pretensions—that they cannot be a hindrance to the freedom of action that the United States and its allies in the war on terrorism need. In short, any sort of recognition accorded to the “Transitional Federal Government” obtains for us no real advantages, but may create all sorts of precedents and other unintended consequence which may come back to haunt us.
- (2) Enhance and strengthen our cooperation with legitimate, democratic, and secular actors in the region, especially Somaliland, but also our partners in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, who are on the frontlines of the expanding crisis. (I would note in passing that Somaliland has repeatedly offered the international coalition against terrorism the use of the former U.S. facility at Berbera.)
- (3) Be aware of the complex web of interests at work in the subregion and how they may or may not be in accord with our interests, much less those of the peoples of the former Somalia. We need to be conscious not only of the competing agendas of neighboring countries—particularly Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Sudan—but also of European nations. For example, quoted in recent media coverage by our major newspapers has been the Italian “special envoy” for Somalia, one Mario Raffaelli. I have yet to see *even one* of the those press reports acknowledge the economic interests of the Government of Italy, the Italian firm De Nadai, a number of Italian diplomats, and, yes, *Signor* Raffaelli himself in the not-insignificant Somali banana trade centered around Lower Shabelle and from which, as we know from

several excellent studies by European non-governmental organizations, that the previous mentioned Minister Atto of the “Transitional Federal Government,” Hussein Mohammed Farah (son of Mohammed Farah Aydiid), and other warlords derive what might euphemistically be called “insurance payments.”

- (4) Finally, recognizing that this long-simmering cauldron has come to a boil, we have to reinforce our force capacity in the region and to give our combatant commanders the authority necessary to deal with the situation even as we pursue other options.

With your leave, I will conclude with an anecdote. A friend recently sent me a clipping from the *Washington Times* from shortly after the Taliban seized control of Kabul. The newspaper’s correspondent wrote: “Afghanistan’s Islamist Taliban rebels swiftly overran Kabul and now surge north of the capital with unexpected speed. In their wake, they impose a new religious severity. Most observers find all this surprising and sinister—but it may be Afghanistan’s best break in many years.” History has not, needless to say, vindicated this rather optimistic prediction; nor will it vindicate similar analyses of recent events in Somalia. One can only pray that the parallels do not extend further.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that I have been able to sketch out some of the challenges and opportunities which the current crisis presents to Somalia, to its neighbors in the Horn of Africa, to the international community, and, ultimately in what perhaps most concerns us as Americans, to the United States. I look forward to your questions and observations. And I renew my thanks to you and the Members of the two Subcommittees for the opportunity to come before you today.

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**Select Pronouncements by Sheikh Hassan Dahir ‘Aweys
and Leaders of the Council of Islamic Courts**

“We must follow the rule of law laid down by Allah. I do not think Somalis will oppose the adoption of the rule of Allah...America is not our God and they are not our leaders. We feel much more superior than America. We are people who believe in Allah; let them do whatever they want.”

—Sheikh Hassan Dahir ‘Aweys
June 27, 2006

"If being a Muslim is crime, I am a Muslim...We will negotiate with [the 'Transitional Federal Government'], discuss and remove the secular articles that are opposed to the Islamic law. The TFG should accept this because the TFG members are also Muslim."

—Ibid.

"We are Muslims and we must work at implementing Quranic law. Democracy will never work."

— Sheikh Mohammed Siad
June 13, 2006

"I would rather not answer this."

— Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmad
June 16, 2006

"I don't think anybody will ask us to do that [arrest terrorist suspects]. We are not assigned to arrest people for them, as you know...[The United States has] no right to do that. As you know, we don't work for the Americans."

— Idem, June 9, 2006

"There are different reports on who is responsible [for the 9/11 attacks]: al-Qaeda, the Jews, even the Americans themselves. It is not right for us to talk about it when real facts are not available."

—Ibid.

"All Somalis must defend the Islamic courts because this is not inter-clan fighting, but war against the infidels. The fighting is between those who support Islam, and godless invaders and those who support them."

—Sheikh Nur Barud
June 7, 2006

"I personally wrote a letter to Bush to tell him that he will lose the war he is waging against the Somali people. The American government doesn't want Somalia to return the rule of law and order, because it is afraid of the emergence of an Islamic government for Somalia that will rule the nation under Sharia law."

—Sheikh Hassan Dahir 'Aweys
May 16, 2006

"Democracy is contrary to Islamic teachings and I told Mr. Geddi [prime minister of the 'Transitional Federal Government'] to fear Allah and stop working for our enemies. Democracy originated in Greece and it allows the public to control the government...It is anti-Islam."

— Idem, May 9, 2006

* Response to the question: "There are Muslim people who commit suicide bombings for their own reasons whatever they could be. How do you see these people? Do you see them as martyrs or criminals? Do you think if you find yourself in a critical position that you can resort to such action?"

"We will fight fiercely to the death any intervention force that arrives in Somalia."

—*Idem*, March 25, 2006

"I'm telling that if IGAD or the UN were impulsive to send troops to Somalia, there would be bloodshed and a new destruction."

—*Idem*, March 21, 2006

"The Western world should respect our own ideas in choosing the way we want to govern our country, the way we want to go about our own business. That is our right...can influence all of my people with the faith and our religion. The existing government is not an Islamic one and we will be having our own Islamic faith and we will be very strong in influencing our people."

—*Idem*, October 12, 2005

"High ranking Ethiopian military officers have been in Jowhar, 90 km away from Mogadishu for the past few months. We must wage Jihad against them...We have been mobilizing all of our assets in the past few months and we are ready to die for saving Somalia."

—*Idem*, September 7, 2005

"We must be wary of actions of non-believers who want us to follow their leadership."

—*Idem*, September 10, 2000